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CURIOUS ACCOUNT
OF THE
ORIGIN OF FAIRLOP FAIR;

*WITH AN ENTERTAINING DESCRIPTION OF THE
MOTLEY MULTITUDE WHO ASSEMBLE
ON THAT OCCASION.*

BY AN ENTERTAINED OBSERVER.

One who view'd, with a cheerful eye,
The passengers as they went by.

LONDON :

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1811.

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1907

ORIGIN OF LADDER PAPER

THE LADDER PAPER COMPANY
NEW YORK, N. Y.
1907

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*The book is a record of
the number of 10. 1. 1. 1. 1.*

FAIRLOP FAIR.

1

THE sun had chas'd the clouds of night,
The sky was blue and clear ;
When thousands rose, with gay delight,
To dress for Fairlop Fair.

2

On the first Friday in July,
Then people meet together,
Regardless of the summer fly,
And fearless of the weather.





3

For those, who pleasure love and fun,
No difficulties find ;
But, helter-skelter, on they run,
Nor any danger mind.

4

Heedless and careless on they go,
Their hearts with joy elate ;
No idle thought forestalls their woe,
Or enters in their pate ;

5

For, neither fearing accident,
Or ought that may betide ;
Pleasure's alone their sole intent,
And mirth their only guide.

6

To gain the Forest, many a nag
Who scarce a leg can move,
Is doom'd a numerous crowd to drag
Of those, who like to rove.

7

From every street, from every lane,
From every alley too,
Such numbers haste a seat to gain,
It's laughable to view.

8

For waggons, carts are cover'd o'er,
To take the motley set ;
And many their aching bones deplore,
Who've thus together met.





9

For men and women, girls and boys,
Are huddled in so close,
For want of air, some make a noise,
And some would fain get loose.

10

But they are in, and they must jog:
Until they see the oak,
For which they were so much agog,
All trouble seems a joke.

11

To see this oak, folks are so mad,
They travel far and near;
They say it's of so large a size,
It shades an acre clear.

12

Some years ago, a party met
Beneath this noble tree:
They cheerfully in mirth were set,
When all did then agree,

13

That yearly they would constant meet;
And, underneath this oak,
They'd always have an annual treat,
And crack a merry joke.

14

Then one, who was a boat-builder,*
A wag and merry blade,
Declar'd next year a boat he'd bring,
As emblem of his trade.

* Mr. Thomas Day, of Wapping.

OLD DAY AND HIS FRIENDS. 7



Published by W. Dorton, Holborn, May 3, 1844.



15

And it should round this spacious oak,
By horses deck'd and fine,
Be drawn, and grace the pleasant joke
With harmony divine.

16

For oboe, horn, and clarionet,
With violin and flute,
Bass, cymbals, and the tamboret,
Should none of them be mute.

17

For all of these, within the boat,
Their symphonies should sound ;
And vocal chorus join the note,
While they were moving round.

18

He also from the tree did take
A branch of noble size,
A coffin for himself to make ;
In which, they say, he lies.

19

Tho', while he liv'd, he, every year,
His merry promise kept ;
'Till he no longer could appear,
But in that coffin slept.

20

Yet to the oak still, every year,
Increasing numbers came ;
And soon they call'd it Fairlop Fair,
And since it bears that name.





21

That now so perfectly it's known,
And so much pleasure's there.
That, when the month of June is flown,
All hie for Fairlop Fair.

22

And, in remembrance of old Day,
A boat is always there ;
In which they sing, and music play,
To keep this annual fair.

23

Around great London many a mile,
For days and weeks also,
Horses and chaises are engag'd,
Unto this fair to go.

24

Oh ! then it is a pleasant sight,
For those just out of town,
To see the folks, from morning light,
Haste to the Forest down.

25

Such horses, and such riders go,
Such poneys, and such nags ;
And donkeys, yok'd in harness too,
Which many a mortal drags.

26

With chaises, gigs, fine tandems too,
With bucks of blood and fire ;
Who dashing, near the vulgar go,
And splash with dirt and mire.





27

But " John, be careful, mind your way,
" Perhaps some charioteer,
" May chance your splashing back to
pay,
" And bring you earth too near,

28

" Then sprawling on the dirty road,
" And hallooing in your need,
" Your tandem, lighten'd of its load,
" Is tearing on with speed."

29

The passenger, with laughter, marks
The poor crest-fallen beau ;
And tittering girls, and saucy sparks,
Rejoice he's laid so low.

30

But we must leave this beau to try
And scramble up again,
To note the numbers riding by,
And laughing at his pain.

31

For coachmen, sure, it is a day
They all must money make ;
For not a hack in town will stay,
That can the journey take.

32

When fine the morn, the weather kind,
Some on the coach-box ride ;
Baskets of prog are tied behind,
Quite full the coach inside.





33

For father, mother, sister Prue,
Roger, with George and Kate,
The little one that's suckling too,
Must all parade in state.

34

These, surely, are enough within ;
And those, upon the top,
That laugh, and stare with silly grin,
Belong unto the shop.

35

“ Fe la! it would be monstrous hard,
“ To pay a coach, you know,
“ And not take all that can be spar'd
“ To see the raree-show.

36

“ Besides, we want their help, to lead
“ The children round the fair ;
“ The coachman will not say a word,—
“ Indeed he won’t, my dear.”

37

Thus, Madam managing the plan,
And fixing all the lumber,
Leaves just for her dear patient man
A corner to encumber.

38

Then crawl the nags, a pair I weet,
If brown and white agree ;
But many a couple such you’ll meet,
And hundreds such you’ll see,





39

Who draw along the cumb'rous loads,
Of would-be gentry fine ;
Who, from some very strange abodes,
With gaudy trappings shine.

40

Thus many a girl, who, all the year,
In some bye lane has been,
Thinks, if she can but now appear,
And have her beauty seen ;

41

If she to Fairlop Fair can get,
She'll there her fortune try,
In hopes a sweet-heart soon to meet,
Who'll wed her, by-and-by.

42

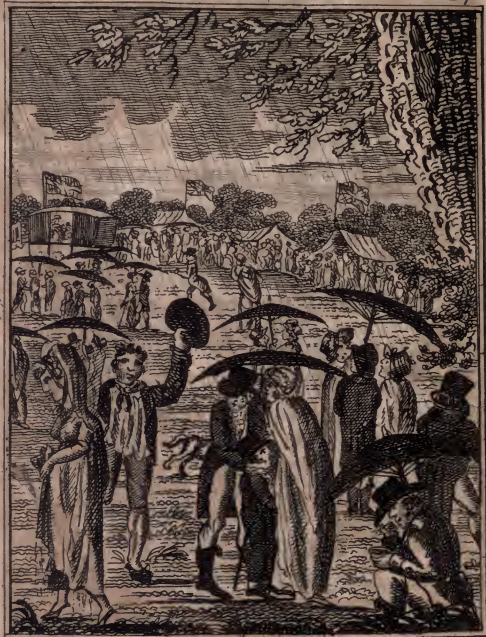
Now thousands, and ten thousands too,
Are wedged close together ;
Not ten, in every hundred, view,
The boat, or horses either.

43

And of the music, ten to one,
If many there can say,
What was the tune, or what the song,
They in the boat did play.

44

For, just as dulcet sounds were heard,
Soft floating on the wind,
A heavy cloud o'er head appear'd,
Which threaten'd most unkind ;





45

And, o'er the gaping frighten'd crowd,
Its sluices open drew ;
Then pouring down with pattering sound,
All in confusion threw.

46

Not one, but all the motley group,
Ran dripping up and down ;
And many beneath a bush did stoop,
Many lay crouching down.

47

The fury of the shower gone by,
They once again assemble ;
But watch with fear the heavy sky,
And at its low' rings tremble.

48

Howe'er the sun with cheerful ray,
Again his light extends,
To give a brilliant close of day,
When Fairlop's pleasure ends.

49

Those who are wise, and sober too,
When day's last sinking hour
Gives notice it is time to go,
Should move, if in their power.

50

For oft confusion takes her reign ;
Whips crack ; and, in the jumble,
Many, high mounted in the train,
Contrive to get a tumble.





51

[cross,

Homeward all bend, some tir'd, some
Some fast asleep and snoring ;
Some scarce to move can get their horse,
While some are loudly roaring.

52

Some with a horn, as thro' they pass,
Alarm each town and village ;
Some, jogging on a patient ass,
Bewail the want of pillage.

53

But let us hope, most got safe home,
And no great harm was done ;
And that another year they'll come
To Fairlop Fair, for fun.

A. R.

*Children's Books recently published by W. Darton,
Jun. 58, Holborn Hill, opposite Ely Place.*

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